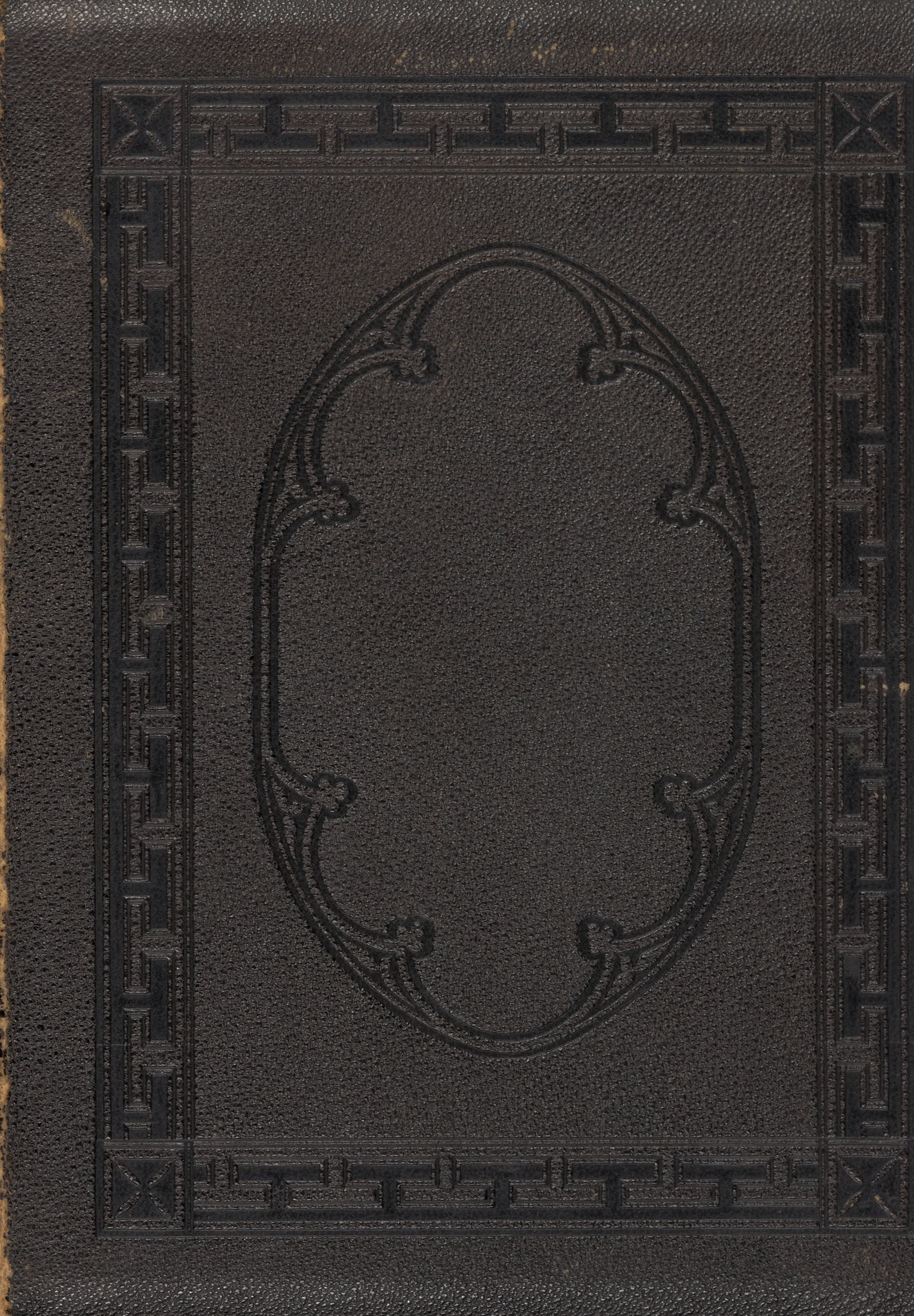

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The COURTIN'

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Illustrated By

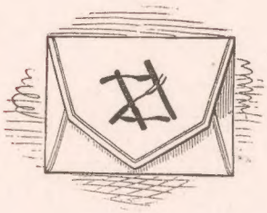
WINSLOW HOMER

THE COURTIN'

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

ILLUSTRATED BY WINSLOW HOMER



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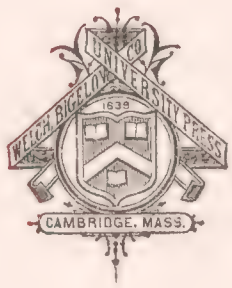


LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

REPRODUCED IN HELIOTYPE FROM DRAWINGS BY WINSLOW HOMER.

I. "*Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown*
An' peeked in thru' the winder."

II. "*There sot Huldy all alone,*
'Ith no one nigh to hender"

III. "*You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?*"

IV. "*Says he, 'I'd better call agin.'*"

V. "*An' . . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.*"

VI. "*An' teary roun' the lashes.*"

VII. "*In meetin' come nex' Sunday.*"

THE COURTIN'

"Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder."

THE COURTIN'.

GOD makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in —
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

"There sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender."

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
  Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
  The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
  An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
  Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
  Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
  On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
  Ain't modester nor sweeter.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"

THE COURTIN'.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
  Clean grit an' human natur';
None could n't quicker pitch a ton
  Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He 'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
  Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells —
  All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
  All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
  Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
  Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
  She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

"Says he, 'I 'd better call agin.'"

An' she 'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
  When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
  O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
  She seemed to 've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he 'd come,
  Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
  A-raspin' on the scraper, —
All ways to once her feelins flew
  Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
  Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
  But hern went pity Zekle.

"An' . . . . Wal, he up an' kist her."

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
  Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
  "Wal . . . . no . . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
  Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
  Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
  Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
  He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

"An' teary roun' the lashes."

Says he, "I 'd better call agin";
  Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
  An' . . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

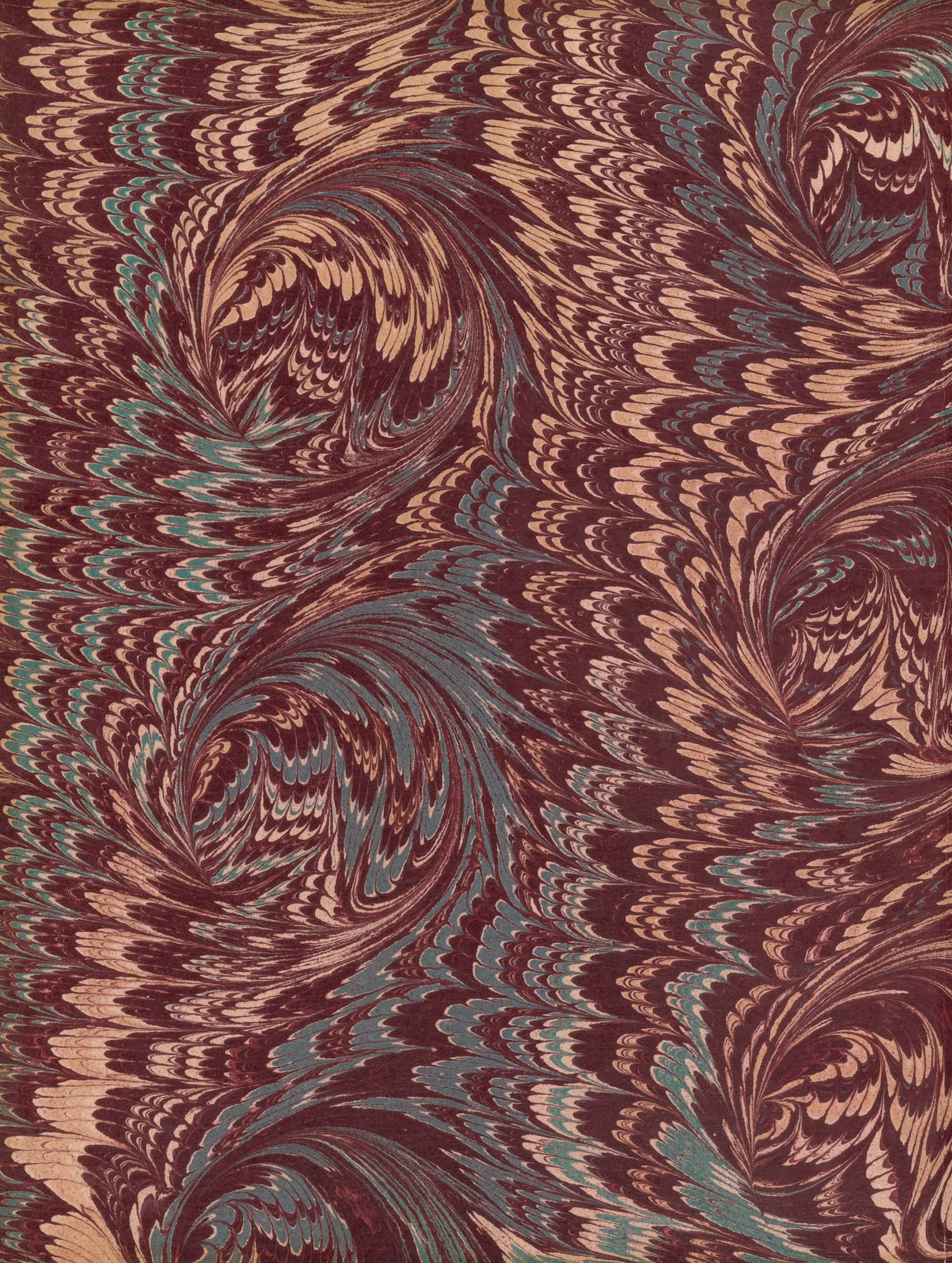
When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
  An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
  Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
  Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
  Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
  And gin 'em both her blessin'.

"In meetin' come nex' Sunday."

Then her red come back like the tide
  Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
  In meetin' come nex' Sunday.



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